The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains labor information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WE PLEDGE— 1 MILLION DOLLARS WAR SAVINGS BONDS FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1689 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 24, 1943 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 33, NO. 34

Meany Challenges Reactionaries Who Wish To Destroy Trade Unions

Pledges Fight To Finish In Address Before N. Y. State Federation Convention

Buffalo, N. Y.—The American Federation of Labor accepts the challenge of the "reactionaries" who are attempting to forge shackles for the trade union movement while workers are concentrating patriotically upon the paramount job of the day, the production of the maximum possible quantity of war equipment for our fighting men, Secretary-Treasurer George Meany told a cheering assemblage of 1,000 delegates at the 80th annual convention of the New York State Federation of Labor.

"We knew that we would have to meet an organized, vicious attempt, not only to take away labor's gains achieved after hard struggles over a long period of years, but to add to them, vicious attempt to destroy trade unionism itself," Mr. Meany said. "We accept the challenge of the reactionaries. We accept the challenge of those who are attempting to discredit labor. We are ready to fight and we are going to fight."

Although to the anti-labor effort to drive a wedge between the soldiers and the wage-earners on the home front, Mr. Meany said that the promises of labor will not succeed in this activity because "no soldiers are themselves working who are temporarily in uniform fighting for their country. Of these fighting workers by the millions out, more than two million actually hold trade union cards themselves.

"These are the boys whom the reactionaries are trying to divide from the labor movement," said Mr. Meany. "Well, that is just not going to happen."

Recalling that organized labor has been attacked for failing to keep its pledge of no strikes 100 per cent, Mr. Meany acknowledged that the no-strike record has not been absolutely perfect. He said the record has been 99.5 per cent perfect and that no one has been defied anyone to show where price no industrial strikes of any moment control, rationing, manpower and other in the state of New York," Mr. Dewey home-front undertakings have been said.

handled with anything like the appeals to the patriotism of labor's adherence to the no-strike pledge.

Mr. Meany cited the phenomenal wartime production achievements of American labor but added that, while organized labor has every right to take great pride in the production records it has established, there is no room for complacency or overconfidence. Peak production has not yet been attained, he said, and it will not be attained until the early months of 1944.

Much of Mr. Meany's speech was devoted to the subject of postwar reconstruction.

"We refuse to accept the theory that there must be a major depression after the war," he said. "Democracy accepted the challenge of economic hurdles down to us by our enemies. It must accept also the challenge of peace. Cooperation of government, industry and labor, which has brought jobs for all in war, can also bring jobs for all in peace.

As measures for providing full employment after the war, Mr. Meany urged comprehensive public works planning program, a public works program and government cooperation in speeding reconversion of private industry from war to peace production when the war is over. In addition, he said the American Federation of Labor will fight for the enactment of the recently introduced Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security Bill and the expansion and improvement of high work and living standards.

The record of the unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor in N. Y. state during the war emergency was hailed by Gov. Thomas E. Dewey, possible republican candidate for President next year.

"We can all take particularly great pride in the fact that there have been defied anyone to show where price no industrial strikes of any moment control, rationing, manpower and other in the state of New York," Mr. Dewey said.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OK'S HUGE WAR BOND DRIVE

Chicago—The Executive Council gave its approval to the drive, inaugurated by the officers of the American Federation of Labor in conjunction with the Treasury Department for the celebration of Labor "Day this year by special purchases of war bonds by all union members and their organizations.

It is pointed out that the money so raised will be expended directly for various types of war equipment, such as Flying Fortresses, tanks, ships and jeeps, which will be named after the purchasing organizations.

The Executive Council declared there is no more constructive and patriotic way to celebrate Labor Day this year when a great majority of war workers will continue on the job so that vital production will not be interrupted.

It expressed confidence that the goal of raising 500 million dollars through such War Bond purchases by Labor Day will be attained by American Federation of Labor members and their union organizations.

PETROLEUM REFINERIES EMPLOY 10,000 WOMEN

Washington, D. C.—About 10,000 women are employed in all types of work in petroleum refineries in the United States, and many more will be hired before the war is over, Petroleum Administrator for War Ralph K. Davies declared.

Urging U. S. refiners to keep up their production of petroleum products by hiring women to supplant the men who are called to the armed forces, Mr. Davies said:

"Experience has shown that women can do and are doing excellent work in refineries throughout the country. Despite the fact that the petroleum industry is losing many skilled workers to the armed forces and other types of employment, it is essential that there shall be no reduction in the present rate of petroleum products because of lack of manpower. A number of refineries already are employing women in many parts of their plants, and the results have been gratifying. As the war continues, more and more refiners will find it necessary to train women to tasks that have heretofore been considered possible only for men to do."

UNION LABEL CIGARETTES SENT TO OVERSEAS FORCES

Chicago.—I. M. Ornburn, Secretary-Treasurer of the Union Label Trades Department, reported to the Executive Council that unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor had purchased and sent 166,000,000 union-label cigarettes abroad to be distributed free of charge to members of the armed forces serving overseas.

The Executive Council expressed gratification over the success of this program and decided that affiliated unions should be encouraged to increase their previous donations for this purpose.

F. D. R. PUTS TEETH IN WLB DECISIONS

Authorizes Sanctions Against Recalcitrant Employers And Employes

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt imposed sanctions against both employers and unions refusing to comply with decisions of the National War Labor Board.

By Executive Order, the President directed that if an employer is derelict in obeying WLB orders that his plant be seized by the Government or that less drastic action such as "control of war contracts, of essential materials and of transportation and fuel" be enforced, provided these steps can be taken without impeding the war effort.

In the case of labor refusing to comply with WLB directives, the Selective Service System was authorized to cancel deferments of recalcitrant individual employees. Power was also granted to withhold in escrow union dues collected under union agreements by employers in plants seized by the Government because of strikes.

The latter provision was widely interpreted as an attempt to forestall any further strike action by the United Mine Workers Union whose case is still pending before the War Labor Board.

In a letter to WLB Chairman William H. Davis, the President revealed that an Executive Order had also been issued under the Connally-Smith Act "for bringing about compliance in the relatively few cases in which executive action may become necessary."

WAR CENTER LAUNDRIES URGED TO RAISE WAGES

Washington, D. C. — Recognizing that the lack of laundry service is sometimes responsible for absenteeism —when women workers have to stay home and do the family's washing, Government agencies are working out a program to keep laundries at full tilt and save the time of housewives who double as factory workers.

"More than 10 per cent of the laundries of the nation have closed during the past 12 months, and the rate at which these closings are occurring is accelerating," Joseph Keenan, WPB's Vice Chairman for War Production, wrote to WLB Chairman William H. Davis.

In line with the program in which WLB, WMC, OPA, and WPB's Office of Civilian Requirements are cooperating, the WLB has instructed its regional boards to speed the processing of applications for wage increases filed by laundries, especially when the laundries are located in areas crowded with war workers.

ARMY DISCHARGE PAPERS ACCEPTED FOR INITIATION

Santa Cruz, Calif.—The AFL Central Labor Union at Santa Cruz has approved a plan whereby the honorable discharge papers from the Army and Navy will be accepted as union initiation fees.

GREEN LABOR DAY TALK TO GO ON AIR SEPT. 6

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green's Labor Day address will be broadcast over a nationwide NBC network on Sept. 6 from 12:30 to 1 P. M., E. W. T.

Mr. Green will speak from Tampa, Fla., where 25,000 workers at the Tampa Shipbuilding Corp. yards will gather to hear him. The program is being arranged by the Tampa Trades and Labor Council.

ITALIAN PEOPLE AIDED BY AMERICAN WORKERS

New York City—American labor has contributed tons of medicines, clothing and medical supplies to the Italian people as rapidly as they are liberated by General Eisenhower's armies, according to a statement made by Matthew Woll, president of the Labor League for Human Rights and vice-president of the American Federation of Labor. At the same time, Mr. Woll demanded that those responsible for the "torture and murder of thousands of members of the Italian labor movement when Mussolini took power in 1922 be brought to justice and punished equally with those who are guilty of war crimes." He also called on the Italian people to revolt against Italian leaders who are counselling continued resistance and to help overthrow the false leaders who refuse to accept the Allied peace terms.

"Because of our fraternal association with Italian labor prior to the days of Mussolini, in 1922, the American Federation of Labor has always believed in the essential democracy of the Italian people, Mr. Woll said. "It has been said many times in disparagement that the Italian soldiers are poor fighters. But we have never concurred in this cynical judgment of an entire people, preferring to believe that the Italian soldiers are poor fighters because they do not believe in their cause.

"It is true that the assistance we can render is not comparable to the assistance which our government may render. Our aid is at best a symbol, a token of the friendship of American labor for the Italian people. But this is a time when men are standing before prison walls and living and dying for those same symbols."

LIVING COSTS PINCH LOW INCOME GROUPS

Washington, D. C.—Twenty million or more persons who have incomes from full time wages, salaries, payments, or small government checks, are being pinched with each rise in living costs, The Office of War Information said.

Among those so penalized are 9,000,000 dependents of men in the armed services; 2,200,000 aged on state public assistance rolls; 1,000,000 disabled veterans or widows and children, drawing pensions or disability compensation, and 158,000 retired and disabled firemen, policemen, state and municipal employes with pensions or retirement systems.

Then there are 739,000 dependent children receiving federal and state welfare funds; 53,000 blind persons; 700,000 retired workers, widows and young children receiving social insurance payments, and 400,000 drawing annuities for which they had saved for many years.

GREATER VACATION PAY RECEIVES WLB APPROVAL

Washington, D. C.—Workers may get more vacation pay in plants where contracts call for it, under a ruling to effect, the WLB announced.

Where an existing contract provides for one or two weeks vacation with pay but does not specifically state the number of hours that each employe is to receive, and a new and longer work week has been adopted since the contract was signed, the company may pay vacation allowance on the basis of the current work week, the directive stated, without seeking Board approval.

Where the contract specifically provides the number of hours' pay to be allowed, the Board may approve changing the basis for the total amount being paid to the revised work schedule. For example, where a vacation plan provided for 40 hours' vacation pay, the Board could approve a change to 48 hours' vacation pay in the event the employes now are working a regular 48-hour week.

HOOVER DENOUNCES RIOTS AS "NATIONAL DISGRACE"

Detroit, Mich.—Civil violence, race riots and insidious campaigns against minority groups are a national disgrace, Herbert Hoover, FBI director, told members of the International Association of Chiefs of Police here.

Hoover called upon police officers to recognize their responsibility for law enforcement and to adopt vigorous, prompt and firm measures to restore peace in the case of such outbreaks. Such disturbances, he said, are a national disgrace and a reflection upon all Americans that altercations between individuals can touch off community-wide conflagrations, which are often seized upon by young hot-and hoodlums, of both sexes, to create depredations of all kinds against property and persons."

Green Charts AFL Post-War Plans Before Teachers' Union Convention

Urges Education For Peace To Outlaw Future Wars And Jobs For All

Chicago.—AFL President William Green called upon the teachers of America to enlist their educational efforts in the cause of permanent peace after victory in this war is won.

Speaking at the convention dinner of the American Federation of Teachers here, Mr. Green outlined a broad program of labor's post-war objectives.

On the domestic front, he urged:

1—That Americans must be kept free and that our "system of private enterprise for labor and for industry must be preserved."

2—That the nation inaugurate a program of peacetime production which will provide employment for all our people and will give those in all walks of life not only the bare necessities of existence, but the full opportunities for economic, social, cultural and recreational progress which are the fruits of civilization."

3—That social security legislation be adopted to insure the American people "against the fear of want and the hazards of illness and disability."

Turning to the international sphere, Mr. Green declared:

"So far as organized labor is concerned, one basic conclusion has been reached. We have come to the determination that the peace treaty fully represented at the peace conference which will follow our victory in this war shall not be written or dictated by international diplomats. We will insist that the peace conference shall not be transformed into a sordid, territorial grab-bag. We have made up our minds that organized workers of all nations, and particularly the American Federation of Labor, shall be fully represented at the peace conferences to prevent any such debacle."

Mr. Green placed specific emphasis on these important conclusions:

"We are resolved first of all that those who are guilty of precipitating this world-wide carnage, those who have persecuted and oppressed and slaughtered innocent and defenseless human beings, shall be made to pay the penalty for their crimes.

"Likewise, our sense of justice demands that the nations of Europe and Asia which have been invaded and devastated and despoiled by the Axis dictators shall be restored to their former independence and powers and given every assistance in the task of reconstruction and rehabilitation.

"Our enemies also should receive mercy—mercy tempered by justice. Those who willingly and criminally participated in the Nazi and Fascist outrages may expect to be dealt with accordingly. But we know that the great majority of the Italian, and German people were the involuntary victims of dictatorship, the dictatorship of Mussolini and Hitler. To them we must offer full opportunity to establish a new life under a free government of their own choice in accordance with the principles of democracy.

"Of course, they will need to be educated in democracy. To accomplish this in principle, it will not be necessary to send American teachers to Europe. Experience, as we all know, is the best teacher. If the Italian and German people have not learned from their bitter experiences what Mussolini and Hitler and their sufferings in this war that Fascism is a hateful fraud and that democracy offers them a better way of life, then there is no hope for them.

"We can do our part in this educational process by treating the people of the defeated nations justly and humanely, by earning their gratitude and respect. However, if we in turn assume the role of the oppressor, we will only breed hate which is bound to break out in future wars.

More than anything else, we must unite here in America in favor of a policy and program which will outlaw future wars. We must fight for it. Let us not heed the prophets of doom who say that because there always have been wars, there must always be wars. That is a philosophy of futility abhorrent to anyone who has faith in humanity. The true reason why there have always been wars is ignorance. The great need of the peoples of the world is education for peace.

"Here is your opportunity as the teachers of America. Arm yourselves with the truth. Await the day—the day for which we are all praying—the day when our enemies surrender unconditionally. And then go out and spread the word—the word of peace."

Mr. Green congratulated the American Federation of Teachers on the chartering of sixty-one new locals during the past year and more than a hundred in the past two years. He said the time has been the full support of the American Federation of Labor in seeking further organization, higher standards and better educational standards. He said the teachers deserved a large share of credit for the fact that the American people had been educated in democracy and were able to resist the propaganda assaults of the enemy.

Next Council Meeting Oct. 2

Chicago—The AFL Executive Council, after completing its report to the next convention of the Federation, adjourned its mid-summer meeting here and decided to meet again on Oct. 2 at Boston, two days before the convention opens.

At that time the Council will take up supplemental reports on events occurring between now and the convention and other matters on which action was deferred.

Before adjournment, the Council considered a detailed report by Joseph A. Padway, counsel for the American Federation of Labor, on anti-labor legislation adopted by State Legislatures. Mr. Padway informed the Council that injunction suits seeking to restrain the enforcement of these laws, pending determination of their constitutionality by the courts, have been filed in Colorado, Texas, Idaho, Alabama and Kansas. Similar court proceedings will soon be instituted in Florida, North Dakota and several other States. First decisions are expected in Colorado and Kansas, where the cases already have been argued.

Because this type of labor legislation deprives American workers of their freedom of speech and assemblage guaranteed by the Constitution and because it would destroy the effective operation of trade unions in the States affected, the Executive Council directed Mr. Padway to prosecute these court actions with the utmost vigor.

AFL Shipyard Workers Honored For High Production Records

Washington, D. C.—Four shipyards, whose employes are members of the AFL Metal Trades Council, have been awarded high production honors by the U. S. Maritime Commission.

The Walter Butler Shipbuilders, Inc., of St. Paul, Minn., and the Moore Drydock Co., of Oakland, Calif., were awarded the Victory Fleet Award for outstanding achievement in construction, conversion and repair of merchant vessels.

The Kaiser Permanente Shipyards, Nos. 1 and 2, Richmond, Calif., were awarded the Maritime Merit Eagle Pennant for continued outstanding production achievement in delivering merchant vessels from all their ship ways.

The Delta Shipbuilding Co., Inc., of New Orleans, which previously won an "M" award, received a Gold Star, signifying continued production achievement, to be added to its "M."

In addition, the Houston Shipbuilding Corp., of Houston, Texas, whose employes constitute AFL Metal Trades Council members, was awarded a Gold Star.

The AFL Plan To Banish Fear of Want

Twelfth Article Urges Larger Federal Grants To Aid the States in Caring For the Needy

When our Social Security law was passed in 1935, one of its sections provided for assistance to old people who were in need and who had not built up a claim to old age benefits insurance through previous employment. Another section provided aid for needy blind people; and a third for dependent children. The federal government was to assist the states in caring for these people.

Matching State Grants for Assistance

This is how it has worked. When an old person needs help, the state can pay him a regular grant of money with the assurance that the federal government will meet half the grant up to $40.00 a month. In other words, for every dollar that the state gives to needy old people, up to $20.00 a month, the federal government will add another dollar. If the state pays only $15.00, the old person in need will get $30.00 a month. If the state thinks he needs $45.00 or $50.00, the federal government will pay $20.00 and the state will pay the other $25.00 or $30.00 if it has the money to do so. It works the same way for blind people who are poor and need financial assistance. In every case the state decides who is to be helped and how much he is to receive.

For helping dependent children the Social Security law empowers the federal government to match what the states pay, up to $18.00 a month for the first child and up to $12.00 a month for other children in the family. That is, the federal government will pay as much as $9.00 a month for the first child if the state pays $9.00. If the state pays only $5.00 a month, the federal government will pay $5.00, making the total aid $10.00 a month. If the state finds that the child needs $25.00 a month, it can get $9.00 a month from the federal government and make up the rest itself. It works the same way with the other children in the family except that the grant from the federal government is limited to $6.00 a month. The state decides what children are to be helped and how much each shall receive.

"The whole idea, of course, is to encourage and aid the states to take care of their own needy people. It has been an enormous help, too. In June of 1942 nearly two and a quarter million old people, 65 years of age or over 70, were assisted under this arrangement. In 27 states the average total grant from the federal and the state funds was more than $20.00 a month; while in 15 states it was less than $15.00 a month. In 1942, also, 54,300 blind people were assisted. In one state, the blind poor people got an average of a little over $9.00 a month, while in the state with the best showing they got an average of $46.00 a month. In 1942 also, more than 842,000 children in 392,000 families received aid in 45 states. Yet in 1942 many people who would ordinarily have needed assistance were at work; men and women in the armed forces; and the widows and mothers of dependent children were able to get jobs and to leave their children in someone else's care.

Do They Get Enough Help?

This is good as far as it goes, but let's take another look at that dependent child who gets $18.00 and his little brother or sister who gets $12.00. The youngsters are dependent because there isn't enough money coming into the home to take care of them. The father may be dead or disabled. The mother has to stay at home to take care of the children. Perhaps there is no other income in the family except the assistance that the children receive. Yet the mother has to eat and be clothed as well as the child, and the father, too, if he is alive and an invalid. That $18.00 a month looks like the extra cost of raising a child after the rent is paid and all the regular household expenses have been met; it does not cover the cost of keeping up the home. Often, however, one or both parents and the child may be trying to live on that money. That family needs an allowance at least as large as a single old or blind person needs; and the family should have enough assistance to take care of every member of the family.

Some states, however, cannot afford to pay even $9.00 a month to match what they could get from the federal grant so as to give their dependent children $18.00 a month. Yet the children in those states are just as much citizens of the nation as well as the state. If they live to grow up, they may become workers and fathers or mothers; and if they don't get started right, they are likely to carry with them throughout life the stunted bodies and minds and the bitter feelings resulting from poverty and privation. So no state can afford to shut its eyes to the needs of children in other states.

Other Needy People

Besides those who are assisted under the Social Security program today, there are millions of people who are in need because they have reached the end of life. Unemployed workers who have exhausted their unemployment compensation or have been disqualified may have nothing to live on. Some injured workers do not get enough accident compensation to provide for themselves and their families. Old people without insurance who have not lived to a state long enough to acquire legal residence may be without any kind of income. Widowed fathers who are trying to "make do" on such an existence on the allowance to their children should have better care. Even if they could get complete social insurance, there will still be some people outside its protection.

The federal government can share with the states the responsibility for caring for all of those people if the Social Security law is liberalized. However, as long as the Social Security law restricts federal assistance to matching state grants to needy aged, children or blind people, the states will have to help them financially assist those who will get $2.00 in aid for every dollar the state can afford.

There are two remedies for this situation. The Social Security law should be changed to permit federal grants for any kind of needy person so as to assist the states to take care of those who most need help. Then, too, the federal government should be able to pay more than half of what the states can afford. If the state cannot pay 50 percent of the absolutely necessary assistance. In other words, the Social Security law should be amended to make it possible for the federal government to pay anywhere from 50 to 75 percent of the needed assistance to poor people. This seems at first glance like favoring the poorer states, but actually today we are paying larger federal grants to the wealthier states which can afford more relief by their poor. So by permitting the federal government to pay a larger share of the aid given to poor people in the poorer states we should really even things up while we are making sure that poor people everywhere throughout the nation find the help they needed.

Helping the States to Do More

Of course, no state is compelled to follow the federal Social Security plan in assisting its poor people. Broadening the public assistance program under Social Security would not coerce the states but would merely help them to do more for those in need.

A. F. OF L. COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL SECURITY,
MATTHEW WOLL, *Chairman*,
GEORGE MEANY,
G. M. BUGNIAZET,
JOHN P. FREY.

September 8 Fixed For Launching Of 'Ben T. Osborne' Liberty Ship

Portland, Oreg.—A Liberty ship, to honor the memory of the late Ben T. Osborne by bearing his name will be launched by the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation yard at Portland on September 8. The ceremony will be in charge of the Oregon State Federation of Labor.

Ben T. Osborne, at the time of his death December 1, 1936, was executive secretary of the Oregon State Federation of Labor, a position he had held for more than 12 years. He was a member of the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers Union, and for a number of years served as a vice president of the international organization and following the first World War.

His services for the Oregon State Federation left their lasting mark on industrial conditions and legislative enactments in the state, including adoption of a little Norris-LaGuardia act in the state in March, 1933, it being one of the early state enactments following adoption of the federal law. In defending and extending the workmen's compensation act, for state industrial accident law, he contributed a service of permanent value. Much of his initial work, and numerous later measures which would have been restrictive of labor activities were defeated in the early and mid-thirties through his efforts and influence.

Osborne was more than an advocate of labor. He was recognized by the citizens of the state as an outstanding citizen who was interested in the general welfare of Oregon.

Baer's Traveling War Cartoons Attract Attention Of Thousands

Washington, D. C.—The thirty-four traveling war cartoons drawn by John H. Baer, Washington labor cartoonist, to encourage war production and the buying of War Bonds, have been exhibited in New York City and Schenectady, N. Y., and Baltimore, Md., where they were viewed by many thousands of persons. In the New York City Public Library alone the collection was viewed by 8,000 people.

Kenneth Dority, assistant to the State Director, War Manpower Commission, Maryland Area, in a communication to Mr. Baer, said:

"We have received most favorable response to the exhibition, and the demonstration they gave of labor's attitude towards the winning of the war has been most helpful in creating good will and understanding."